



## Commercial Services Plan *Update*

### Progress on the Plan

Since February of 2002, Mount Rainier National Park's commercial services team has been working on a draft *Commercial Services Plan*. The draft plan will present alternatives for the type, scope and scale of commercial services used by the public to experience Mount Rainier. It will also present an array of possibilities for concession contracts, commercial use authorizations, and special park uses. After the public has an opportunity to offer insight and input, a final version of the plan will be created. It will help guide the management of commercial services in Mount Rainier National Park for the next five to ten years.

Using your input from public meetings in Seattle, Tacoma, Yakima, and Ashford, as well as letters gathered during the public scoping process, the team has made considerable progress. Over the past four months, they have been drafting alternatives regarding guided climbing services, guided wilderness travel, shuttle buses, firewood sales, towing services, and equipment rentals.



### When Will the Draft Be Ready?

When the public scoping process for the Commercial Services Plan began in March of 2002, the Commercial Services Team anticipated completing a draft plan by May 15th. We now expect the draft to be released by the end of October.

The federal laws governing concessions within national parks require that commercial services have financial viability. To ensure a high quality, impartial analysis of the financial viability of the draft plan's alternatives, we have contracted with Pricewaterhouse Coopers, one of the world's leading financial consultants. They will be in the park in July and should complete their analysis by the end of September. Soon after, the draft alternatives will be released for public comment.

#### The Planning Process at a Glance

Public comments gathered

Team develops alternatives <--- **We are here**

Pricewaterhouse Coopers completes feasibility study

Draft Commercial Services Plan and  
Environmental Assessment released

Public comments gathered

Final Commercial Services Plan and  
FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact) released

## Public Scoping: Your Concerns

The Public Scoping which took place in March turned up a wide range of views concerning Mount Rainier National Park's commercial services. People expressed opinions on everything from shuttle services to firewood sales. Here are some of common themes we heard from you:

- Mount Rainier ought to remain relatively noncommercial
- Competition can be healthy, but the park should develop carrying capacities and not allow business to exceed these limits
- There should be opportunities for services not currently offered, such as wilderness education seminars, photography courses, glacier travel courses, and ski mountaineering
- Group size for commercial trips should be limited to protect natural resources and preserve the quality of the visitor experience
- Shuttle services should provide access to Westside Road
- There should be a greater diversity of companies offering guided climbing
- Additional routes should be opened for commercial climbing
- Guide services should be held to a high standard of safety
- Guide services should be monitored regularly for environmental impacts



Soon, draft alternatives will be released for public comment. Your input helps drive the decision making process. **Thank you for your comments and please continue to stay involved!**



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